

Message Text

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70

ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 EA-07 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 AGR-05 AID-05 IO-10 COME-00 TRSE-00 CIEP-01

STR-04 OMB-01 CEA-01 SAJ-01 /095 W

----- 095490

R 020925Z JAN 76

FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8563

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

PORT OF SPAIN 029

USLO PEKING

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 0047

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EPWD, ETRD, CH, AS, CU

SUBJECT: SUGAR IMPORTS, PRC

1. DURING COURSE OF CALL BY AUSTRALIAN COMMISSION HONG KONG ECONOFF (ON OFFICIAL COEULTATION IN PEKING), CUBAN COMMERICAL COUNSELOR TOLD HIM CUBA DID NOT EXPECT TO SELL MUCH SUGAR TO THE PRC IN 1076 UNLESS THE CHINESE ARE WILLING TO ACCEPT BULK SHIPMENTS. EYE SAID THAT THE CUBANS HAD SCRAPPED THEIR LAST BAGGING FACILITIES, AND HAVE NOW COMPLETELY CONVERTED TO BULK SUGAR EXPORTS.

2. AUSTRALIAN ECONOFF ALSO LEARNED THAT, IN NOVEMBER CANBERRA INSTRUCTED THE AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY PEKING TO MAKE AN APPROACH TO THE PRC ON A PROPOSED LONG-TERM SUGAR PURCHASE COMMODITY AGREEMENT, INITIALLY EXPECTED TO COVER ANNUAL SHIPMENTS OF 200-300,000 MT OF AUSTRALIAN SUGAR. THE CHINESE FAILED TO RESPOND TO THE AUSTRALIAN APPROACH, BUT DID
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INDICATE THAT THEY WOULD AT LEAST CONTINUE TO IMPORT

35 TO 50,000 MT ANNUALLY OF AUSTRALIAN SUGAR. IN LIGHT OF THE UNSEATING IN THE RECENT AUSTRALIAN ELECTION OF NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT MINISTER PATTERSON, WHO PUSHED THE IDEA OF A LONG-TERM AGREEMENT, THE ECONOFF BELIEVES THAT THE PRPOSAL--UNDER DESULTORY DISCUSSION SINCE NOVEMBER 1973-- WILL BE QUIETLY SHELVED BY THE NEW FRASER GOVERNMENT.

3. COMMENT: THE AUSTRALIANS HAVE FOUND THE CHINESE LACK EQUIPMENT TO HANDLE BULK SUGAR IMPORTS PROPERLY. INRONICALLY, THE BULK SUGAR HANDLING FACILITY EARLIER SOLD THE PRC BY AUSTRALIA IS NOW APPARENTLY USED FOR BAGGING WHEAT AND OTHER GOODS. NOW, THE CHINESE WOULD SEEM TO HAVE A CHOICE; EITHER TO INSTALL NEW BALK SUGAR HANDLING FACILITIES, OR TO MAKE ARRANGEMENTS WITH NEW SUPPLIES ABLE TO DELIVER SUGAR IN BAGS. THE SECOND ALTERNATIVE APPEARS THE MORE PROBABLE. IN THIS REGARD, 1976 MAY SEE RENEWED CHINESE MOVES TO NEGOTIATE PROPOSED LONG-TERM SUGAR COMMODITY AGREEMENTS WITH JAMAICA AND GUYANA TO SUPPLEMENT THE ALREADY-SIGNED 1974 AGREEMENT WITH BRAZIL FOR THE SUPPLY OF 150 TO 200,000 MT SUGAR ANNUALLY (AP-DJ IN HK STANDARD NOV 29, 1974).
CROSS

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